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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/816,232	03/26/2001	Yusaku Fujii	1075.1153	8717
21171	7590	10/06/2005	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			KIM, CHONG R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2623	

DATE MAILED: 10/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/816,232	FUJII, YUSAKU	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Charles Kim	2623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 May 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-53 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 15-28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 49 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3, 13, 14, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47, 50 and 52 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 4-12, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51 and 53 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 March 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment and Arguments

1. Applicant's amendment filed on May 27, 2005 has been entered and made of record.
2. In view of applicant's amendment, the objection to the claims are withdrawn.
3. Applicant's arguments, see pages 27-31, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-3, 13, 14, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejections have been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Hara, U.S. Patent No. 6,282,302 ("Hara"), the details of which are provided below.
4. Applicant's arguments, see pages 29-30, with respect to claims 50 and 52 have been fully considered, but they are not deemed to be persuasive for at least the following reasons.

Applicants argue that their claimed invention differs from the prior art because "Bergenek fails to teach or suggest 'calculating an adjustment shift amount based on a result of the collation by said collation section, by which amount at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is shifted for adjusting the result of the alignment of the two fingerprint-like patterns so that the alignment is improved' and 'shifting at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns by the adjustment shift amount calculated by said adjustment-shift calculation section so as to adjust the result of the alignment by said alignment section,' as recited in amended independent claim 50." The Examiner disagrees. Bergenek clearly explains that an adjustment shift amount (rotations or position shifts) is determined based on a result of the collation (if the match is not acceptable) by the collation section (col. 14, lines 37-62), by which amount at least one of the

fingerprint-like patterns is shifted for adjusting the result of the alignment of the two fingerprint-like patterns so that the alignment is improved (col. 14, lines 37-62. Note that the fingerprint-like pattern is shifted until an acceptable match is determined), and shifting at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns by the adjustment shift amount calculated by the adjustment-shift calculation section so as to adjust the result of the alignment by the alignment section (col. 14, lines 44-62). Therefore, it appears that Bergeneck is still applicable to claim 50, as amended.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-3, 13, 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hara, U.S. Patent No. 6,282,302 (“Hara”).

Referring to claim 1, Hara discloses a pattern-center determination apparatus for determining a pattern center of a fingerprint-like pattern, which is formed with a number of pattern curves, the apparatus comprising:

a. an auxiliary-line generation section for generating two or more auxiliary lines extending continuously from an outer circumference side of the pattern curves of the fingerprint-like pattern toward an inner circumference side of the pattern curves so that each of the two or

more auxiliary lines intersects each of the pattern curves perpendicularly or substantially perpendicularly (figures 10-11); and

b. a pattern-center determination section for determining the pattern center based on one or more intersecting points at which the two or more auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other (col. 3, lines 44-52 , col. 8, lines 4-38, and figure 10).

Referring to claim 2, Hara further discloses that the auxiliary-line generation section is operable to generate two auxiliary lines, and a pattern-center determination section that is operable to determine an intersecting point at which the two auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other as a fingerprint-like pattern center (col. 3, lines 44-52 and figures 10-11).

Referring to claim 3, the claim's use of "or" between two limitations only requires the prior art to meet either one of the limitations. In this case, Hara further discloses that the pattern-center determination section includes an auxiliary-line-intersecting-point calculation section for calculating one intersecting point at which the two auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other, and a most-crowded-point calculation section for calculating a most crowded point, at which the intersecting point calculated by the auxiliary-line-intersecting-point calculation section is most crowded, so as to determine the calculated most crowded point as the pattern center (col. 3, lines 44-52 and figures 10-11. Note that the one intersecting point is considered the most crowded point).

Referring to claims 13 and 14, see the rejection of at least claim 1 above.

Art Unit: 2623

6. Claims 50, 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bergenek et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,241,288 ("Bergenek").

Referring to claim 50, Bergenek discloses a pattern alignment apparatus for aligning two fingerprint-like patterns, each of which is formed with a number of pattern curves, while adjusting the alignment of the two fingerprint-like patterns, comprising:

- a. an alignment section for aligning the two fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 6-53);
- b. a minutia extraction section for extracting a group of minutiae from each of the fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 6-53);
- c. a collation section for collating the two groups of minutiae extracted from the two fingerprint-like patterns by the minutia extraction section based on a result of the alignment by the alignment section (col. 14, lines 6-53);
- d. an adjustment-shift calculation section for calculating an adjustment shift amount based on a result of the collation by the collation section, by which amount at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is shifted for adjusting the result of the alignment of the two fingerprint-like patterns so that the alignment is improved (col. 14, lines 6-53); and
- e. an alignment-result adjustment section for shifting at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns by the adjustment shift amount calculated by the adjustment-shift calculation section so as to adjust the result of the alignment by the alignment section (col. 14, lines 6-53).

Referring to claim 52, Bergenek further discloses that the adjustment shift is at least one of a rotational angle (2-5 degrees) by which one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is to be

rotated around a predetermined point with respect to the other of the two fingerprint-like patterns and a shift by which one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is to be parallelly shifted with respect to the other of the two fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Bergeneck et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,241,288 ("Bergeneck") and Hara, U.S. Patent No. 6,282,302 ("Hara").

Referring to claim 29, Bergeneck discloses a pattern alignment apparatus for aligning two fingerprint-like patterns, each of which is formed with a number of pattern curves, the apparatus comprising:

- a. an alignment-reference determination section for determining one or more alignment references (center region) for each of the fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 7-10);
- b. an alignment section for aligning the two fingerprint-like patterns so that the alignment references of the two fingerprint-like patterns determined by the alignment-reference determination section coincide with each other; the alignment-reference determination section including a pattern-center determination section for determining a pattern center of each of the fingerprint-like patterns as one of the alignment references (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Bergenek does not explicitly disclose that the pattern-center determination section includes an auxiliary-line generation section for generating two or more auxiliary lines extending continuously from an outer circumference side of the pattern curves of the fingerprint-like pattern toward an inner circumference side of the pattern curves so that each of the two or more auxiliary lines intersects each of the pattern curves perpendicularly or substantially perpendicularly and a pattern-center determination section for determining the pattern center based on one or more intersecting points at which the two or more auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other. However, these features were exceedingly well known in the art. For example, Hara discloses a fingerprint pattern-center determination section including:

- i. an auxiliary-line generation section for generating two or more auxiliary lines extending continuously from an outer circumference side of the pattern curves of the fingerprint-like pattern toward an inner circumference side of the pattern curves so that each of the two or more auxiliary lines intersects each of the pattern curves perpendicularly or substantially perpendicularly (figures 10-11); and
- ii. a pattern-center determination section for determining the pattern center based on one or more intersecting points at which the two or more auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other (col. 3, lines 44-52 , col. 8, lines 4-38, and figure 10).

Bergenek and Hara are combinable because they are both concerned with determining the center of a fingerprint-like pattern based on image processing. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the pattern-center

determination section of Bergeneck in view of Hara's teachings. The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to enhance the accuracy of the fingerprint imaging system (Hara, col. 2, lines 41-49). Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bergeneck with Hara to obtain the invention as specified in claim 29.

Referring to claim 32, Bergeneck further discloses:

- c. a minutia extraction section for extracting a group of minutiae from each of the two fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 7-53), and
- d. a collation section for collating the two group of minutiae extracted from the two fingerprint-like patterns by the minutia extraction section based on the alignment by the alignment section (col. 14, lines 7-53)
- e. an adjustment shift calculation section for calculating an adjustment shift of at least one of two fingerprint-like patterns based on a result of a collation by a collation section so that an alignment of the two fingerprint-like patterns is improved (col. 14, lines 7-53); and
- f. an alignment-result adjustment section for shifting at least one of the two fingerprint-like patterns by the adjustment shift calculated by the adjustment-shift calculation section so as to adjust a result of the alignment by an alignment section (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Referring to claim 35, Bergeneck further discloses that the adjustment shift is at least one of a rotation angle by which one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is to be rotated around a predetermined point with respect to the other of the two fingerprint-like patterns and a shift by which one of the two fingerprint-like patterns is to be parallelly shifted with respect to the other of the two fingerprint-like patterns (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Referring to claim 38, Bergeneck discloses a pattern verification apparatus for verifying a group of object minutiae for verification extracted from an object fingerprint-like pattern for verification with a group of registered minutiae extracted in advance from a registered fingerprint-like pattern, each of the object fingerprint-like pattern and the registered fingerprint-like pattern being formed with a number of pattern curves, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a pattern inputting section for inputting the object fingerprint-like pattern (col. 14, lines 7-53);
- b. an alignment-reference determination section for determining one or more alignment references (center region) of the object fingerprint-like pattern inputted by the pattern inputting section (col. 14, lines 7-53);
- c. a minutia extraction section for extracting the group of object minutiae from the object fingerprint-like pattern inputted by the pattern inputting section (col. 14, lines 7-53);
- d. a registration-data obtaining section for obtaining registration data regarding the registered fingerprint-like pattern, the registration data including the group of registered minutiae and one or more alignment references (center region) of the registered fingerprint-like pattern (col. 14, lines 7-53);
- e. an alignment section for aligning the object fingerprint-like pattern or the group of object minutiae and the group of registered minutiae so that the alignment references of the object fingerprint-like pattern determined by the alignment-reference determination section and the alignment references of the registered fingerprint-like pattern obtained by the registration-data obtaining section coincide with each other (col. 14, lines 7-53);

f. a verification section for verifying the group of object minutiae with the group of registered minutiae based on the alignment by the alignment section (col. 14, lines 7-53);

the alignment-reference determination section including a pattern-center determination section for determining a pattern center of the object fingerprint-like pattern as one of the alignment references of the object fingerprint-like pattern, the alignment references of the registered fingerprint-like pattern including a pattern center of the registered fingerprint-like pattern (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Bergenek does not explicitly disclose that the pattern-center determination section includes an auxiliary-line generation section for generating two or more auxiliary lines extending continuously from an outer circumference side of the pattern curves of the fingerprint-like pattern toward an inner circumference side of the pattern curves so that each of the two or more auxiliary lines intersects each of the pattern curves perpendicularly or substantially perpendicularly and a pattern-center determination section for determining the pattern center based on one or more intersecting points at which the two or more auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other. However, these features were exceedingly well known in the art. For example, Hara discloses a fingerprint pattern-center determination section including:

i. an auxiliary-line generation section for generating two or more auxiliary lines extending continuously from an outer circumference side of the pattern curves of the fingerprint-like pattern toward an inner circumference side of the pattern curves so that each of the two or more auxiliary lines intersects each of the pattern curves perpendicularly or substantially perpendicularly (figures 10-11); and

ii. a pattern-center determination section for determining the pattern center based on one or more intersecting points at which the two or more auxiliary lines generated by the auxiliary-line generation section intersect with each other (col. 3, lines 44-52 , col. 8, lines 4-38, and figure 10).

Bergenek and Hara are combinable because they are both concerned with determining the center of a fingerprint-like pattern based on image processing. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the pattern-center determination section of Bergenek in view of Hara's teachings. The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to enhance the accuracy of the fingerprint imaging system (Hara, col. 2, lines 41-49). Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Bergenek with Hara to obtain the invention as specified in claim 38.

Referring to claim 41, Bergenek further discloses that the pattern inputting section is operable to input the registered fingerprint-like pattern, the alignment-reference determination section is operable to determine the alignment references of the registered fingerprint-like pattern inputted by the pattern inputting section, the minutia extraction section is operable to extract the group of registered minutiae from the registered fingerprint-like pattern inputted by the pattern inputting section, and the registration-data obtaining section is operable to obtain both the alignment references of the registered fingerprint-like pattern determined by the alignment-reference determination section and the group of registered minutiae extracted by the minutia extraction section as the registration data regarding the registered fingerprint-like pattern (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Referring to claim 44, Bergeneck further discloses an adjustment-shift calculation section for calculating an adjustment shift of a group of object minutiae or/and a group of registered minutiae based on a result of a verification by a verification section so that the alignment of the group of object minutiae and the group of registered minutiae is improved; and an alignment-result adjustment section for shifting the group of object minutiae or/and the group of registered minutiae by the adjustment shift calculated by the adjustment-shift calculation section so as to adjusting a result of the alignment by the alignment section; a verification section being operable to output a result of the verification between the group of object minutiae and the group of registered minutiae based on the adjustment of the alignment result by the alignment-result adjustment section (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Referring to claim 47, Bergeneck further discloses that the adjustment shift is at least one of a rotation angle by which at least one of the group of object minutiae and the group of registered minutiae are to be rotated around a predetermined point with respect to the other of the two groups of minutiae and a shift by which at least one of the group of object minutiae and the group of registered minutiae are to be parallelly shifted with respect to the other of the two groups of minutiae (col. 14, lines 7-53).

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 15-28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, 46, 49 are allowed.
9. Claims 4-12, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 53 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

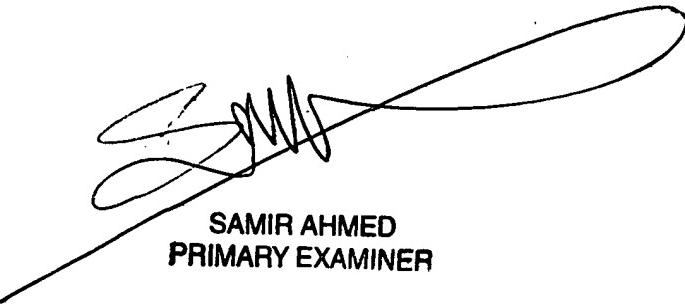
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charles Kim whose telephone number is 571-272-7421. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon thru Thurs 8:30am to 6pm and alternating Fri 9:30am to 6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jingge Wu can be reached on 571-272-7429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-272-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ck
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October 3, 2005


SAMIR AHMED
PRIMARY EXAMINER